MARVEL LEGACY

HOME OF THE BRAVE

696

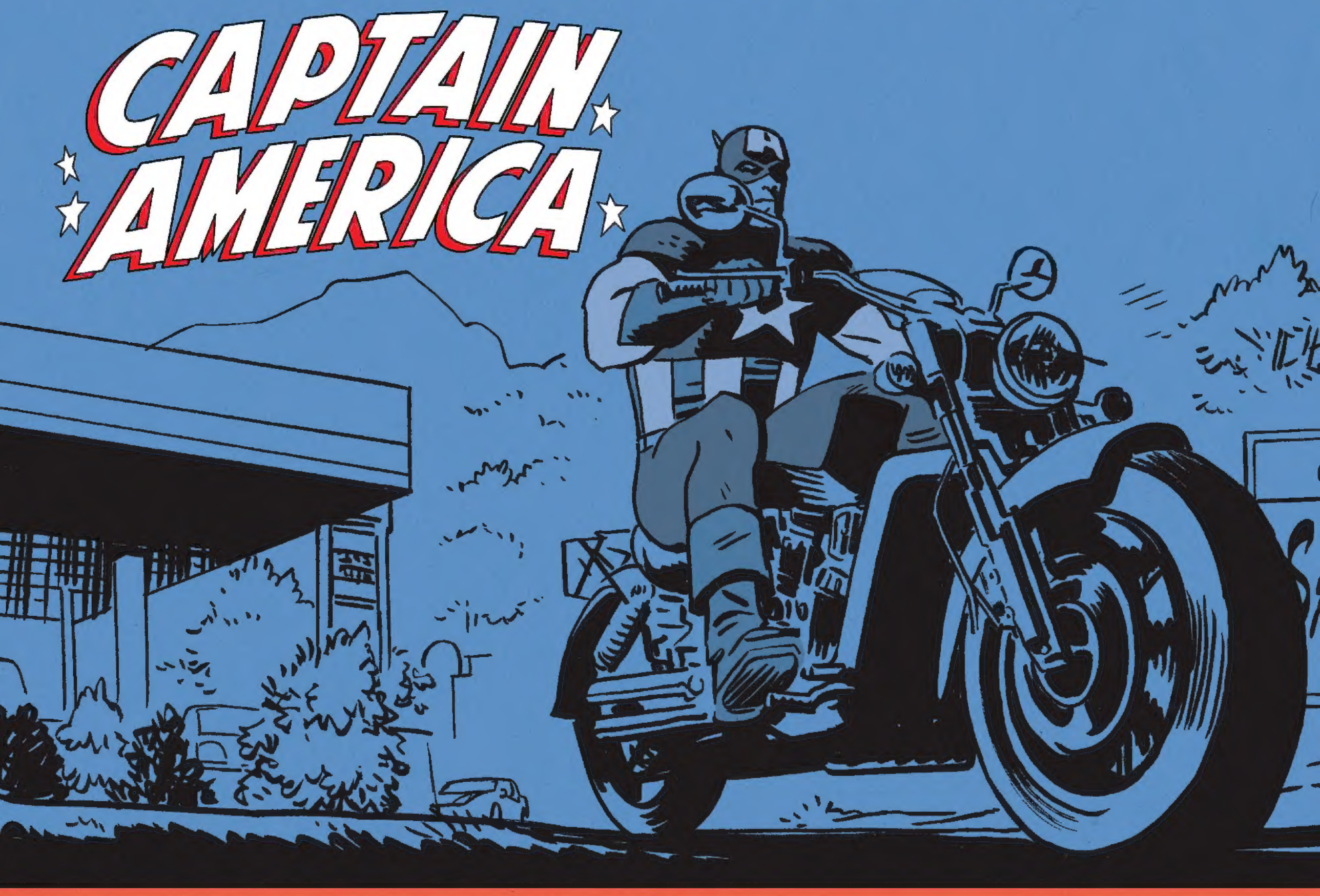
CAPTAIN AMERICA®

MARK WAID
CHRIS SAMNEE
MATTHEW WILSON

CAPTURE THE FLAG!

SAMNEE '17
MW

1940! As the world teetered on the brink of global war, frail Steve Rogers entered a secret laboratory and was transformed into the American Super-Soldier! For five thrilling years, he fought the Axis powers--until a freak stroke of fate threw him into suspended animation. When he awoke, he was a man decades out of his time! Since that fateful day, Steve Rogers has sought his destiny in this brave new world!



An evil version of Captain America led the world to the brink of destruction. The original Captain America returned in time to stop him, but the dark legacy of the Secret Empire lingers on--a truth felt by no one more than Steve Rogers himself. Can Steve find his place in a world that has been made to fear Captain America?

STORYTELLERS: MARK WAID & CHRIS SAMNEE COLOR ARTIST: MATTHEW WILSON
LETTERER: VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA COVER: CHRIS SAMNEE & MATTHEW WILSON
VARIANT COVERS: RON LIM, CORY HAMSCHER AND RACHELLE ROSENBERG
GRAPHIC DESIGNER: CARLOS LAO ASSISTANT EDITOR: ALANNA SMITH EDITOR: TOM BREVOORT
EDITOR IN CHIEF: AXEL ALONSO CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER: JOE QUESADA
PRESIDENT: DAN BUCKLEY EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: ALAN FINE

CAPTAIN AMERICA CREATED BY JOE SIMON & JACK KIRBY

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SHARON, I'M FINE.

A LITTLE NORTH OF *ATLANTA*. HUMID, BUT NICE.

WHO KNOWS? MAYBE THAT'S THE NEW NEIGHBORHOOD.

Welcome to...
SAUGA RIVER

OKAY, CAN YOU HEAR ME *NOW?*

BECAUSE I DON'T PLAY "CANDY CRUNCH."

WHATEVER. THIS ONE SERVES ME JUST FINE.

WHY THE TRIP? I'M TIRED OF BEING A *COUCH-SURFER.*

I HAVEN'T HAD MY OWN PLACE IN *YEARS* THAT WASN'T SUBSIDIZED BY S.H.I.E.L.D. OR *TONY STARK* OR WHOEVER BEFORE ALL *THAT* WENT AWAY.

WHICH ALWAYS TIED ME TO THE *NEW YORK* AREA.

IT CAN'T HURT TO CHECK OUT OTHER CITIES. IF CAPTAIN AMERICA IS SUPPOSED TO REPRESENT EVERYBODY, I SHOULD KNOW MORE "EVERYBODYS."

OKAY. ROAMING CHARGES ARE KILLING ME.

I'M KIDDING. KIND OF.

IF THE AVENGERS REALLY NEED ME, REMIND THEM I'M ONLY A QUINJET AWAY. LATER.

EXCUSE ME. SAW YOUR "HELP WANTED" SIGN.

I'M NOT INTERESTED IN THE JOB, BUT I WOULD BE HAPPY TO WASH SOME DISHES IN EXCHANGE FOR A LATE LUNCH.

RECKON WE CAN DO THAT. WHAT'S YOUR NAME, SON?

STEVE.

YOU'RE *HIM*, AREN'TCHA? HONEY, IT'S *STEVE ROGERS!*

YOU GOT A MIGHTY FAMOUS *FACE*, SON. I'M *HONORED*. PLEASE. *SIT.*

THE DISHES--

ARE YOU *KIDDING? CAPTAIN AMERICA* EATS HERE FOR *FREE* FOR AS LONG AS HE *LIKES! NO CHARGE* FOR *YOU!*

HONEY, PUT A *VERY THICK STEAK* ON THE GRILL!

WOW. WHAT BRINGS YOU TO SAUGA?
NO. PLEASE. I WANT TO EARN MY KEEP--
CHANNEL 4? YOU HAVE TO GET DOWN HERE RIGHT AWAY! YOU WON'T BELIEVE WHO'S HERE...!
WAIT. THERE'S NOT TROUBLE HERE, IS THERE? SHOULD WE BE WORRIED?
CAN I GET A PICTURE?
CAN I GET A PICTURE?
CAN I GET A PICTURE?
CAN I GET A PICTURE?
CAN I GET A PICTURE?
NO! LET THE MAN RELAX!
...
OKAY. I ACCEPT YOUR HOSPITALITY. AS LONG AS YOU LET ME WASH SOME DISHES.
NO, SIR!
A FEW DISHES.
NOPE.
ONE DISH.
CAN I TAKE A PICTURE OF THAT?
SURE.
ONE DISH.

ATLANTA.

--SPOTTED AT A DINER IN SAUGA RIVER. OUR REPORTERS ARE EAGER TO APPROACH ROGERS AND FIND OUT WHY HE'S HERE--

DINER

KLIK

AS SOON AS WE CAN MAKE OUR WAY PAST A SIZEABLE CROWD AND A VERY PROTECTIVE DINER OWN--

APTAIN AMERICA IN SAUGA

SWIKK

"WHY HE'S HERE."

ISN'T IT OBVIOUS...?

HERE'S THE *DAM.*

WE HAVE NOW BEGUN *AND* CONCLUDED YOUR TOUR OF THE CITY'S NOTEWORTHY SITES.

YOU'RE SELLING YOURSELVES *SHORT.* IT'S A LOVELY TOWN, JOE. NOT WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR--IT'S NOT BIG ENOUGH FOR ME TO KEEP A LOW *PROFILE.* BUT IT'S A FINE PLACE.

THANKS AGAIN FOR SNEAKING ME OUT THE BACK, BY THE WAY.

I TOLD MY WIFE TO PARK YOUR BIKE IN THE GARAGE SO NOBODY'D MESS WITH IT.

NOW THAT FOLKS KNOW YOU'RE ON THE ROAD, YOU REALIZE THEY'RE GONNA RECOGNIZE YOU WHEREVER YOU GO.

IT'S NOT SOMETHING I GIVE A LOT OF THOUGHT TO, TO BE HONEST.

FOR THE LOVE OF GOD, AT LEAST FIND A CAP AND MAYBE SOME SUNGLASSES.

BA bapapapapa BApapa

INCOMING CALL

HONEY

THAT'S THE WIFE. SHE'S PROBABLY WONDERING WHAT'S *KEEPING* ME SO LONG.

HI, SWEETIE. WE'RE--

WHAT?

CAP, YOU NEED TO SEE THIS. SHE SAID IT'S A LIVE INTERNET FEED AND THAT EVERY SINGLE STATION HAS PICKED IT UP.

THIS IS BAD.

I REPEAT: THIS MESSAGE IS FOR **CAPTAIN AMERICA.**

NO. NOT A MESSAGE. A *CHALLENGE.*

CAPTAIN, YOU CAN FIND ME ATOP THE PICTURESQUE *SAUGA RIVER DAM.*

STRIKE THAT. YOU *SHOULD* FIND ME, AND *SOON.*

BECAUSE IT'S BEEN A *VERY* RAINY SUMMER. THE RIVER'S SO HIGH, THE DAM CAN BARELY *HOLD* IT.

AND IN ABOUT *TWENTY MINUTES,* I'M OPENING THE *MAIN FLOODGATE.*

THE *TOWN.* OH, *GOD.* HE'LL WASH AWAY THE *WHOLE TOWN.*

THAT'S NOT *NEAR* ENOUGH TIME TO *EVACUATE!* WHAT ARE WE GONNA--

talk

SWORDSMAN.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD.

DON'T GET CUTE.

INHERITOR OF THE MANTLE. YOU *KNOW* THAT. YOU CAME HERE TO SHUT ME DOWN BEFORE I COULD EVEN RECLAIM THE *NAME*.

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE THIS, BUT I HAD NO IDEA YOU WERE EVEN HERE.

I'M NOT SURPRISED YOU COULDN'T LIE *LOW*, THOUGH.

IF YOU'RE ANYTHING LIKE YOUR *PREDECESSOR*, YOU HAVE AN EGO BIG ENOUGH TO SEE FROM *SPACE*.

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

WHAT DOES ANY GOOD AMERICAN WANT? A QUIET HOME, LOVE AND MILLIONS OF DOLLARS COERCED FROM TOWNS THAT WANT TO STAY *SAFE.*

IF I CAN BE SEEN TAKING THE HEAD CLEANLY OFF AN *AVENGER,* I'D CALL THAT AN *ENDORSEMENT.*

COME GET IT.

ZA-SH

FWONG

VIBRANIUM ALLOY SWORD. ABSORBS SHOCKS. TOTALLY INDESTRUCTIBLE.

TOUGH FOR YOU.

TKLANK

I'LL WORK AROUND.

thwap

I'M SURPRISED EVEN *YOU* CARE ABOUT THIS LITTLE BURG ENOUGH TO DIE FOR IT.

ARE THERE *PEOPLE* HERE?

RRNK

I SHOULD HOPE SO.

WELL, THERE YOU GO.

AS I SAID...

...TWENTY MINUTES.

TIME'S UP.

MAIN FLOODGATE ACTIVATED

FWSHHHH

WHAT--?

NO!

PREPROGRAMMED. WHAT DID YOU THINK I WAS DOING BEFORE YOU SHOWED UP?

I SAID YOU COULD *FIND* ME HERE.

I NEVER SAID YOU COULD *STOP* ME.

HURRY! CLOSE THE GATE!

I'M TRYING! HE LOCKED THE SYSTEM! IT'S NOT RESPONDING!

MANUAL OVERRIDE?

IT WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD! THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN FORCE IT SHUT WITH THE RIVER SWOLLEN TO BURST!

YOU OKAY?

ARCH...

...ARCHIMEDES...

HUH?

"GIVE ME A...LEVER AND... A FULCRUM...

"...AND I CAN MOVE THE WORLD."

FIND SOMETHING! *ANYTHING!*

?

NOTHING *HERE!* WE NEED SOMETHING *THIN* AND *STRONG*, AND THERE'S JUST NO--

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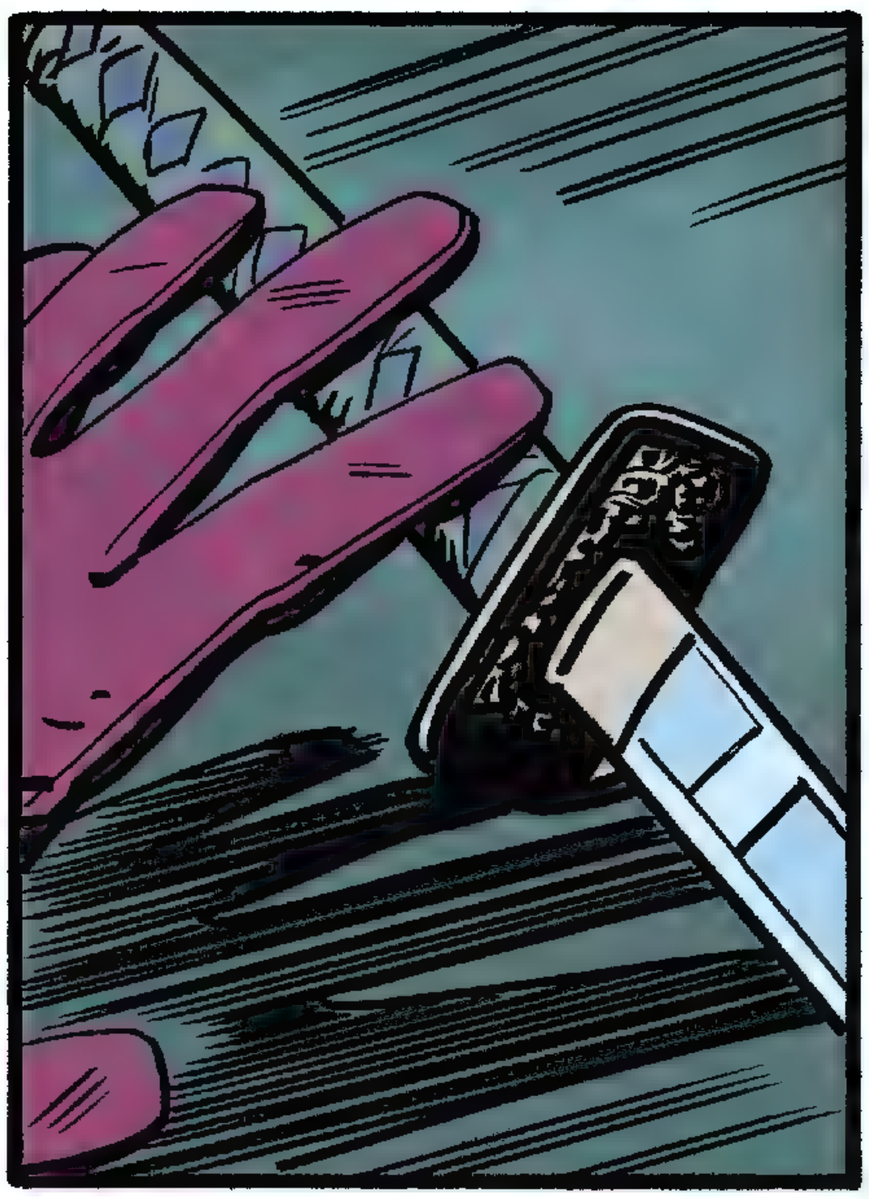
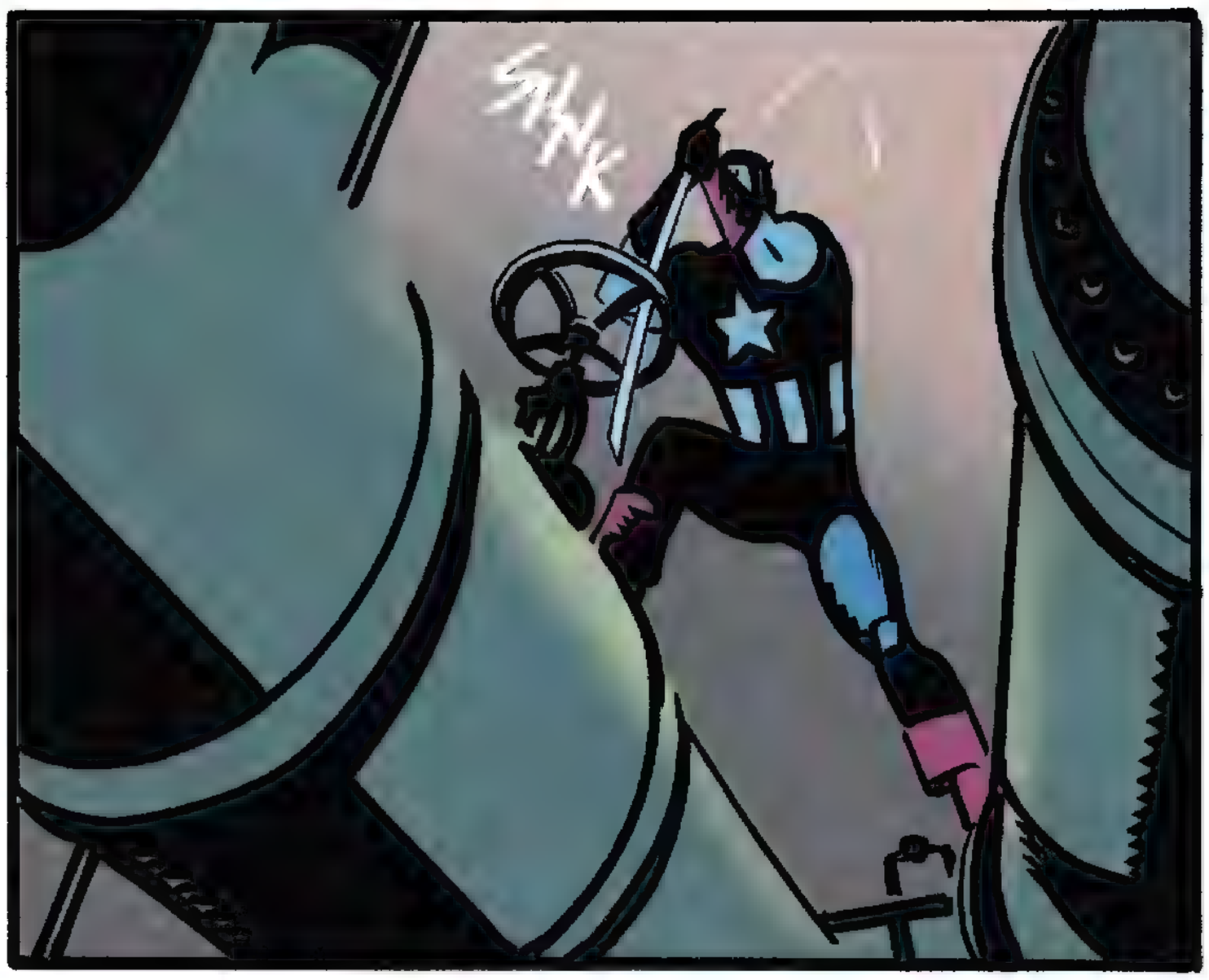
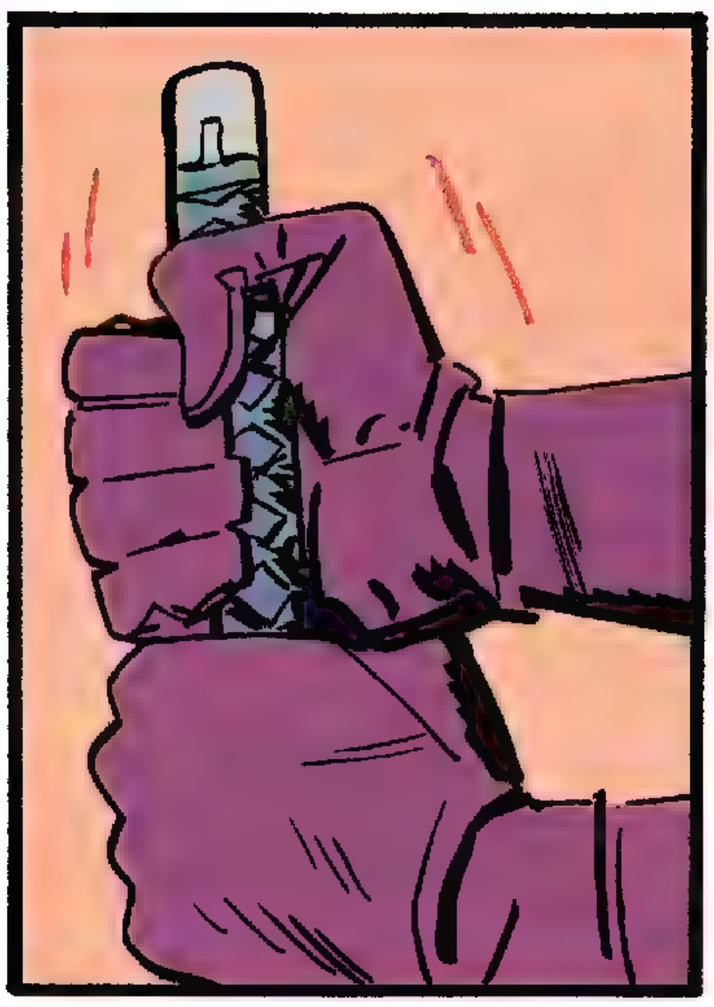



SHNK



NNNN--

--NNNHHHH--

RRRNKK

THOOM

OH, MY GOD.

YOU DID IT!

YOU SAVED THE TOWN.

TELL YOU...WHAT, FRIEND...

...PHONE THE POLICE...TO PICK UP SWORDSMAN...

...AND WE'LL CALL IT EVEN.

...LOST A COUPLE OF **BASEMENTS** AND A **PLAYGROUND.** THAT'S IT. IF YOU'RE READY TO MOVE ON, DO IT BEFORE WE THROW YOU A **PARADE.**

YOU GONNA BE OKAY?

FEELS LIKE I JUST BENCHED THE **HULK,** BUT YES.

WHAT'S THIS?

FOR THE ROAD. WIFE'S **SPECIALTY.** HOPE YOU LIKE **CHILI.**

WHAT DO I OWE YOU?

ALL RIGHT. FAIR TRADE. THIS ONE TIME.

TAKE CARE.

CITY LIMIT

SAUGA RIVER

NEXT: DANGEROUS GAME

CAP'S CORNER

WHAT DOES CAPTAIN AMERICA MEAN TO YOU?

I recently found an old photo of me as a three-year-old. It's from our first real vacation as a family--Dad is holding me up outside of the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. I don't remember much from that road trip other than we stopped at Walt Disney World for my first of many visits in my lifetime, and that a bird pooped on me on a ferry. Don't laugh--to the Italians, it's a sign of good luck. Who knows? Maybe I wouldn't be writing this right now had that pigeon's aim been a little off that day.

But two things immediately struck me about the photo. One was the year--1979. Those were the days long before iPhones, so pictures were precious. You only got, what, 24 pictures per roll? Film wasn't cheap and you needed a place to keep all of those little cartridges. It's not a particularly great photo, and I'm clearly not in any mood to take a picture, so I wondered why that particular moment of me needed to be captured.

But the other thing I noticed in the picture is that I'm wearing a Captain America shirt.

1979 means it had been just 17 years since Dad--the youngest of seven children--came to the United States from Sicily, 14 years since he graduated from high school, nine years since he graduated from college, seven years since he married Mom and started a family, three years since he got his first master's degree and started his own business, and just a couple of months since he got his second master's degree. He's holding me, the first generation of American-born Caramagnas, in front of a symbol of American exceptionalism.

This wasn't a picture of me; it was a picture of Dad.

I--and more specifically my shirt--am part of the metaphor.

So what does Captain America mean to me? The American Dream. That through will, determination, hope and yes, a little bit of luck, all things are possible. That a scrawny kid from New York can serve his country with honor. That someone with no money or grasp of the language can make something of himself in a foreign land. That a kid who grew up loving super heroes can one day make a living playing in their world.

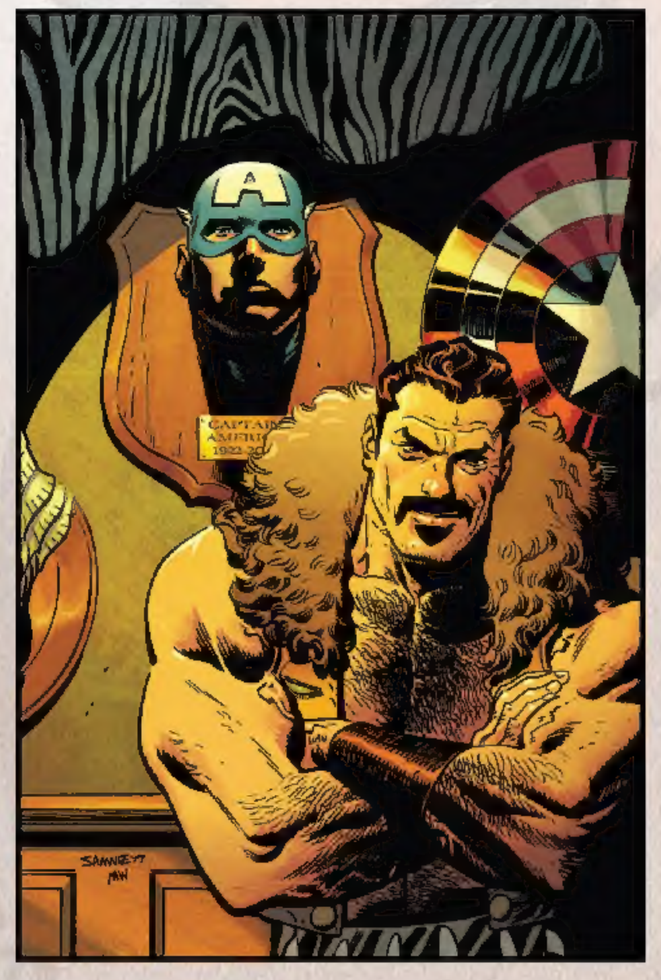
I know what you're thinking: "Isn't the American Dream dead?"

Well, we thought Captain America was dead once or twice, too.

-Joe Caramagna

NEXT:

CAPTAIN AMERICA #697



BIG GAME HUNTER!

What does Cap mean to you? Send us emails at **MHEROES@MARVEL.COM** and mark them **"Okay to Print,"** or tweet us using the hashtags **#CapLegacy** and **#OKtoprint** for a chance to see your marvelous missives in future issues!

ZONE